

awaiting passage by the other body. This measure, H.R. 4110, the Veterans' Programs Enhancements Act of 1998, was approved on October 10, 1998 by the House by a unanimous vote of 423 to 0. As agreed to by the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees and approved by the House, H.R. 4110 resulted from a consensus building process. This process created a bill that all concerned believed was cumulatively better than the sum of its parts. The compromise included parts of S. 2358, and of my bill, H.R. 3279, that allows the use of epidemiological models to determine what conditions ought to be compensated with regard to Persian Gulf War veterans. I considered this step to be a major gain for veterans. I sincerely believe that, in overriding the compromise, we will do a great disservice to our Gulf War veterans.

H.R. 4110 allows the prevalence of illnesses veterans experience to serve as a basis for compensation determinations. This model—one supported by the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Illnesses—is thought by many scientists to provide an approach that gives veterans the benefit of the doubt. Even if veterans are unable to prove that their illnesses resulted from any of a host of possible causes, as the language in S. 2358 and now, would require them to do, conditions that they experienced more frequently than their peers could serve as a basis for compensation.

By including the text of S. 2358 in the Omnibus and Emergency Appropriations Bill of 1998, those who have wrought the Omnibus and Emergency Appropriations Bill of 1998 have violated not only the spirit, but the letter, of the agreement of the authorizing committees. This is nothing less than a travesty of the legislative process. This is nothing less than using strong arm tactics to achieve the will of one. This is wrong, plain and simple.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4328,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 12, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, while I support the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1999, I am very concerned about a provision in the bill that only provides funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State through July 15th; thereby delaying Congress' decision on statistical sampling in the 2000 census until the Supreme Court rules on the legality and constitutionality of this method. I am not comfortable with this. It is yet another Republican-led effort to ensure that all Americans are not counted in the 2000 census.

For quite some time, we have been engaged in what has become a bitter fight over the use of statistician sampling. How we choose to handle the year 2000 census is one of the most important issues facing State and local communities across the Nation. In fact, it is an issue of fundamental fairness and basic economics. With the year 2000 census upon us, we cannot afford to further delay the implementation of the most effective means of counting the U.S. population.

The census count is a constitutional requirement for reapportioning the House of Rep-

resentatives. It is also used to: determine the allocation of billions of taxpayer dollars to States and localities; determine within-State legislative redistricting; make decisions regarding the administration of various Federal programs; and compile many kinds of economical and statistical research.

Statisticians across the Nation have already indicated widespread support of sampling as the most scientifically accurate and cost-effective census enumeration method. In fact, in 1991, a congressionally mandated National Academy of Sciences panel of nationally recognized experts supported this conclusion by stating that a "Differential undercount cannot be reduced to acceptable levels at acceptable costs without the use of integrated coverage measurement and the statistical methods associated with it."

A second panel of experts confirmed these findings, in 1992 and 1996, when it further determined that sampling is critical to the success of the 2000 census. There is no other way to avoid the mistakes of the past.

Speaking of the past, it is a well known fact that the 1990 census, which cost a recorded \$2.6 billion, repeated a disturbing trend of disproportionately missing higher numbers of minorities than non-minorities in the census enumeration. For the first time in history, this most recent census was less accurate than the preceding one. In fact, the 1990 census undercount is estimated to have been 33 percent greater than that of the 1980 census. Four times as many blacks, 5 times as many Hispanics, 2 times as many Asians and Pacific Islanders, and 5 times as many American Indians as non-Hispanic whites were missed in the count. This resulted in greater expenditures for non-response follow-up.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford the consequences of another inaccurate census. We have scientific proof that sampling is the only method of ensuring that the 2000 census is fair and accurate and that it is inclusive of all Americans. If we do not utilize sampling techniques, we can expect an undercount of at least five million people, the majority of whom will be children, minorities and the urban and rural poor. We can also expect to waste valuable taxpayer dollars. For according to the U.S. Census Bureau, a year 2000 census that incorporates sampling surveys would save from nearly \$675 million to \$800 million.

It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues not to hesitate to do what is right. We must not forgo the cost effectiveness and accuracy of statistical sampling.

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM ACT OF 1998

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 12, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2431, the religious persecution freedom bill. In its current form, this measure is too narrow to address the issues facing the global community today.

H.R. 2431 implies to the world that somehow religious persecution should be given protection and heightened priority before other forms of abuse. I strongly believe that all forms of oppression and persecution, whether

they are for religious, racial, or nationality reasons, or whether they are due to individuals standing up for their political beliefs which are most often in defense of democracy, should be addressed in this legislation. There must be special protections against all forms of persecution.

Operationally, the religious persecution freedom bill would undermine U.S. efforts to support the goal of religious freedom, as well as other important U.S. foreign policy interests. More specifically, the measure would establish an office of religious persecution monitoring to provide the imposition of sanctions against countries engaged in a pattern of religious persecution.

This measure would prohibit Federal agencies and U.S. citizens and exporting goods, including religious torment facilitating products, to countries and significant entities engaged in religious torture. H.R. 2431 proposes sanctions that would be counterproductive to convincing foreign governments to prevent limitations on religious freedom. This could possibly lead to misguided repercussions against minority religious groups that are perceived as causing deterioration of relations with the United States.

By imposing automatic sanctions, this legislation could harm bilateral relations with allies, as well as limit Presidential flexibility and raise questions regarding U.S. international obligations. In addition, this bill undermines the U.S. policy to respect all human rights.

Mr. Speaker, current law already provides an adequate basis for the United States to impose sanctions on foreign entities that violate human rights. Furthermore, automatic imposition of sanctions could dissuade foreign governments or persons from cooperating with the United States to prevent limitations on religious freedom. In its current form, this bill could harm U.S. political and economic relationships with other countries. For example, it legislates sanctions without consideration for exempting emergency food aid and distribution programs that would place many innocent civilians in danger of starvation.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that legislation sanctions would alienate significant diplomatic and trade partners. It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 2431, the religious persecution freedom bill. Vote "no" to H.R. 2431.

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF
INSPIRATION

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 12, 1998

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that our nation was created was to celebrate the freedom of religion. And over the years, many Americans have devoutly professed their faiths and found strength within their churches. Next month, on November 15, Bay City First Church of the Nazarene is celebrating its 75th anniversary of inspiring its members to follow God's guiding light, and, most importantly, the success that the Church has had in achieving that goal.

As Reverend Marc Meulman points out in his announcement of this special event, on November 15, 1923, a small group of Nazarenes joined together to officially organize the